



Spring 2007

## Calendar

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In summer 2005 we knew it was time. Joey had maintained well on the fluids for almost two years. But he now was very thin, slept most of the time and wasn't enjoying his normal routine. He was fading away in front of our eyes, and we were not willing to deprive him of the chance to live as robustly as possible. In November, we made the transplant appointment, and drove to Philadelphia the first week of December.

It's hard to describe Lillian Aronson: she has a serene, ethereal presence, incongruous with her down-to-earth nature. As much as we were taken with her medical knowledge, we were overwhelmed by her compassion for both patients and owners. Our respect for her abilities was equaled only by our appreciation of her warmth and caring. We met the doctor, but we fell in love with the person.

The real surprise about the renal transplant program involves the most obvious hero of the story, the kidney donor cat, who is required to be adopted into the family post-transplant. Before Joey's operation, **Jamie Meyer** [renal transplant nurse] introduced us to Ryan's donor pool. All the cats were wonderful, so we asked Jamie to choose. She was smitten with one who had been in the program over a year. He was such a "love bug," as they called him, you'd swear you saw little cartoon hearts popping from his eyes! We fell so hard for him that, out of gratitude, we named him Jamie.

The last part of the story is YoYo, another transplant-program donor we took home. When Joey was in recovery after the transplant, Tony spent time outside his cage to keep him company (with toothbrush, naturally). The transplant scheduled after Joey's involved YoYo as a donor, but during surgery he was deemed unsuitable to donate. Tony got to know YoYo as he recovered in Joey's ward over the next few days, and we were told YoYo would be put up for adoption. Of course, we said not to bother; he was coming home with us! So that's how we ended up with two Penn Vet transplant program kitties instead of just the donor.

We both wanted to give to Penn Vet because of the gift of life given to Joey by everyone involved in the renal transplant program. We felt fortunate to have found Dr. Aronson, so it was easy for us to want to give something back to her and the Hospital, whose staff truly love animals and understand what they mean to their owners. We wanted to express our gratitude and help other animals suffering from kidney disease. Our gift was personally fulfilling because it gave us a way to be a small part of Dr. Aronson's program. In the long run, it is truly a healthy thing to give a little back when you've received so much.

—TONY RODGERS AND MARY JANE CULLIN

## JULY 2007

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### July 16

**6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.** – Penn Vet Alumni Reception  
The 144th AVMA Annual Convention  
*Washington Convention Center, Washington, DC*

## AUGUST 2007

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### August 18

**6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.** – Penn Vet Alumni Reception  
The 125th PVMA Annual Scientific Meeting  
*Hershey Lodge and Convention Center, Hershey, PA*

## SEPTEMBER 2007

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### September 7

**2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.** – Veterinary Medical Alumni Society Executive Board Meeting  
*Vernon and Shirley Hill Pavilion, Philadelphia, PA*

### September 8

**All day** – Third Annual Carnivale of the Dogs, with Commerce Bank, Penn Vet will host a M\*A\*S\*H\* Tent and "Ask the Vet" booth  
*Rittenhouse Square, Philadelphia, PA*

### September 29

**All day** – Parents & Partners Day  
*Philadelphia and New Bolton Center*

## OCTOBER 2007

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### October 19

**Evening** – Rush Shippen Huidekoper Society Dinner  
*Philadelphia*

### October 27

**Evening** – Alumni Reunion Dinner  
*New Bolton Center, Kennett Square, PA*

## NOVEMBER 2007

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### November 2 to 4

The Fourth International Equine Conference on Laminitis and Diseases of the Foot  
*Palm Beach County Convention Center, West Palm Beach, FL*

For information, please visit  
[www.laminitisconference.com](http://www.laminitisconference.com).